How to open a conversation with your community about Technological Sovereignty and strategies to influence and achieve changes in relation to technologies

(This workshop activity was developped by Spideralex and Margarita Padilla, with the edits of Fieke Jansen).

There are several ethical, political and philosophical reasons why a person or a community feels uncomfortable, upset or at odds when using many of the information and communication technologies (ICTs) that exist today. These may include:

- Ecological and environmental protection reasons, including the conditions under which materials are extracted and assembled; the lack of options against planned obsolescence; the production of toxic waste and/or energy consumption, and carbon emissions involved.

- Abuse or attempts by governments and/or hate groups to control, monitor, censor, trap and/or create new forms of violence against individuals and citizens (especially women and marginalised communities).

- Various practises of the companies who offer the online services that we use: the inaccessibility of their terms of service and privacy policies; the existence of industrial monopolies; tax evasion; precarious working conditions for IT industry workers; lack of cultural and gender diversity; and sexism and discrimination that occurs in many of the environments responsible for the development and governance of these tools and services.

- Despite the availability of alternative tools and technologies and the options for producing, consuming and developing technologies, it seems that there are few technologies that are produced, consumed, marketed and developed in an entirely fair and ethical manner.

This document presents some attitudes, strategies and tactics you can use to try to influence others and bring about change. Some of the objectives seek to to shape new technological futures that are fairer, more egalitarian and aware of the finite nature of global resources. The matrix and outline below aim to:

- Change your practices around ICT use by providing new criteria to consider when choosing, consuming or discarding technology. Along with taking into account its usability, convenience or popularity, it also encourages you to consider where it has been produced, by whom and what their motivations are/were.

How is the technology used? Evaluate how these technologies encourage attacks on privacy, freedom of expression, freedom of collaboration, or freedom of sharing, for example. Some of the tactics include: switching to alternatives, actively boycotting a product or technology, extending its intended life span, reducing its energy consumption, etc.

- Raise awareness of the ethical, philosophical, political, social and ecological issues of ICTs, for example:
  - draw attention to your MEPs and political representatives when they are making decisions about governance of the Internet
  - investigate and organise whistleblower campaigns, if you have some visibility and influence
  - support organisations that advocate for the protection of digital rights, women workers or consumers of technologies
  - join groups that lobby against big companies, so that they can change their policies or defend the freedom and neutrality of the network
  - contribute to the development and maintenance of ethical, fair and responsible technological alternatives
  - develop the community by contributing your time, money or knowledge to alternatives, so that they can grow and become increasingly visible, viable and sustainable.

- Achieve changes at the individual level, by changing your own habits, practises and consumption of the following ICTs, as well as making changes collectively, by joining others in shaping the changes you want to experience, and/or developing or maintaining technologies that seem more appropriate and fair to you.

In the following document we list some strategies and tactics that you can carry out alone or with others to influence and achieve changes at various stages of the technology production lifecycle. This table is neither complete nor exhaustive, as the ways to oppose and change things depend on your context and your ability to activate actions and networks. We have organised this table around the different stages of the life cycle of technologies by breaking down proposals for concrete actions that can be taken with technologies:

Ignore/Reject
Choose/Alternate
Modify/Change/Adapt
Create/Invent/Innovate

We recommend that you adapt the table below to your local context and the needs and possibilities of the people composing your community.

ICT cycle	Reject	Alternative	Modify	Create
Production of the technologies (extraction of the minerals and components)	Don't change your phone and computer frequently; extend the duration of their lives.	Be committed to alternatives that take these criteria into account in the chain of operations, production (e.g. Fairphone).	Recycle and give your devices new uses	Create appropriate technologies and proximity, invent analogue solutions.
Production of the technologies (assembly of the technologies, centres of production)	Find out about the manufacturing conditions of the technologies; support the resistance movements of those who make them.	Supports global network actions (e.g. Good Electronics).	Configure and reduce the power consumption of your browsing and devices. Turn off devices completely when not in use.	Encourage spaces to recycle and create new machines for the community.
Access to ICTs	Educate yourself about the social, economic and political advantages of using free and open source software. Do not use proprietary operating systems if you are not required to.	Choose non-commercial, citizens, free and neutral internet providers (e.g. Guifi.net). Ask your city council to also offer internet access provided by citizenship organisations.	Ask public institutions to design responsible portals that are accessible to all and from all operating systems. Migrate to free/open source software operating systems.	Set up a hacklab/fablab with friends in your neighbourhood or civic centre. Create a feminist hackerspace with your friends, look for safe spaces with internet connection. Translate content and software of

				interest into your languages.
Using ICTs	Read the terms of service and privacy policies before installing a new app or create a new account on a service. Ask yourself what its business model and its turnover are. Speak out against any harassment, abuse or violence that you see in the network.	Install free, non-commercial, ethical alternatives on your computer and mobile. Seek technological cooperatives of social solidarity and economy to develop and maintain the technologies you need. See if you can contribute in any way to the free programmes or services you use, whether it's making a financial contribution, taking on some task or making it known among your networks.	Ask for technological tools in schools that work with free operating systems. Foster spaces for critical and citizen education on ICTs. Configure and reduce the power consumption of your navigation and devices. Use what you need, not more. Even if they are free, technologies have environmental costs and social risks.	Foster spaces for critical and citizen education on ICTs. Set up a hacklab/fablab with friends in your neighbourhood or civic centre. Whatever you learn, teach it to others. Offer to be a facilitator Be generous in sharing knowledge.
ICT development	Don't buy or consume technological products that promote	Support networks of free culture and the defence of the right to share.	Make visible and support the contributions made by women, transgender people	Set up a hacklab/fablab with friends in your neighbourhood or civic centre.

	sexist and/or racist tendencies (in how they are presented /advertised, or in how they are designed)	Encourage the use of free licenses in the field of academic and scientific research funded by public resources.	and cultural minorities to ICT development.	Search your nearby networks that are developing free and open technologies and see how you can support or contribute to them. There are people trying to build free technologies almost everywhere, not just in Silicon Valley.
Internet governance	Minimise the use of applications that build "walls" on the Internet, such as mobile proprietary and commercial apps.	Use browsers and other network software built by foundations that defend the neutrality of the network (e.g. Mozilla Foundation). Open an email account on a non-commercial server, even if it costs you a small annual fee. If you cannot afford it, check other possible ways of contributing to alternatives.	Ask your representatives to protect a free and neutral internet. Get informed and attend consultations and participatory processes.	Keep using basic federated technologies that do not depend on a single company or technology (e.g. email, mailing lists, social networks).
Governance of the services we use on the Internet	Do not use Internet services that attack the freedom and neutrality of the	Use non-commercial alternatives that respect the privacy and security of their	Raise your voice against any form of harassment and violence you see on	Don't contribute to the creation of monopolies. Use several browsers and

	network. Find out what they are.	users.	the Internet.	search engines. Pluralize.
End of life technologies (waste and recycling)	Don't change your phone and computer frequently; extend the duration of its life.	Don't upload all your information to the cloud. Having your information on your computer makes you aware of the space it takes up and the energy it consumes.	Share some devices. Maybe you don't need one for each person.	Encourage spaces to recycle and create new machines for the community.